

On page 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner objects to Claim 8 because Claim 8, lines 6 recites, “assemble” and alleging the term should be changed to “assembly.”

Solely for the purposes of addressing the claim objection and not for overcoming any prior art reference, in response, Claim 8 is amended to now recite “assembly,” as suggested by the Examiner. Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the objection to Claim 8.

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Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 112

1. Claim 9

On page 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejects Claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. § 112 as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. Examiner states that Claim 9 is not clearly understood because it could mean the stadium/slide seat system can be mounted on either side of the seat, the seat can be operated from either the front side of the seat or the rear side of the seat, or that a single stadium/slide seat system has a control lever on both the left side and the right side of the seat. The Examiner reads the limitation meaning the seat device can be operated from either the front or rear, as described in paragraph [0040].

Solely for the purposes of addressing the claim rejection and not for overcoming any prior art reference, in response, Claim 9 is amended to now recite the following:

“The vehicle stadium/slide seat system of claim 8, wherein the vehicle stadium/slide seat system is ~~configured to operate~~ operable from either side of the vehicle seat.”

As such, Applicant respectfully asserts that claim 9 is now definite and particularly points out and distinctly claims the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention and requests withdrawal of the rejection Claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. § 112.

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Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102

1. Claims 1-10 (Yokota)

On page 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejects Claims 1-10 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,059,345 to Yokota (“Yokota”).

Claim 1 is in independent form. Amended Claim 1 recites, *inter alia*, a “method for facilitating vehicle ingress and egress with a vehicle including at least one non-first row seat coupled to the vehicle in a seat track and having a seat cushion and seat back,” the method comprising, “manipulating a first mechanism of the non-first row seat for adjusting a seat cushion to flip forward,” “rotating the seat cushion while maintaining the seat back in an upright position,” and “moving the back seat in the seat track to a pre-selected position.” Claims 2-3 depend from independent Claim 1.

Yokota does not disclose, teach or suggest “a method for facilitating vehicle ingress and egress,” as recited in independent Claim 1. In particular, Yokota does not disclose rotating the seat cushion while maintaining the seat back in an upright position. Yokota discloses slide rail device for a fold and tumble seat wherein both the seat back and the seat cushion are folded together and tumbled (i.e., rotated) forwardly.

In contrast, the present application discloses a stadium/slide seat wherein the seat cushion is rotated forwardly while the seat back is maintained in an upright position, as shown in FIGS. 14a – 14g. The method of use and motion of the present innovation is entirely different from that disclosed by Yokota. Yokota does not anticipate that which is disclosed and claimed in the present application.

Claims 2-3 which depend from independent Claim 1 are therefore also patentable (35 U.S.C. § 112 ¶ 4).

Claim 4 is in independent form. Amended Claim 4 recites, *inter alia*, a “method for facilitating stowing of a non-first row seat of a vehicle having at least one row of non-first row seats coupled to the vehicle in a seat track, with each non-first row seat having a seat cushion and seat back,” the method comprising, “manipulating a lever associated with the non-first row seat to stow the non-first row seat,” “rotating the seat cushion forward and downward such that the seat cushion is flush with the vehicle floor,” and “rotating the seat back to a position adjacent to the seat cushion.” Claims 5-7 depend from independent Claim 1.

Yokota does not disclose, teach or suggest “a method for facilitating stowing of a non-first row seat,” as recited in independent Claim 4. In particular, Yokota does not disclose rotating the seat cushion forward and downward such that the seat cushion is flush with the vehicle floor. Yokota discloses slide rail device for a fold and tumble seat wherein both the seat back and the seat cushion are folded together and tumbled (i.e., rotated) forwardly.

In contrast, the present application discloses a stadium/slide seat wherein the seat cushion is rotated forward and downward such that the seat cushion is flush with the vehicle floor, as shown in FIGS. 11 – 13. The method of use and motion of the present innovation is entirely different from that disclosed by Yokota. Yokota does not anticipate that which is disclosed and claimed in the present application.

Claim 8 is in independent form. Amended Claim 8 recites, *inter alia*, a “vehicle seat system for mounting in a vehicle, the seat system having a seat track, a seat cushion and a seat back,” the seat system comprising, “an easy-entry adjuster coupled to the linkage assembly and configured to release a track engagement device coupled to the linkage assembly, wherein the vehicle seat can be moved to one of a design position and an easy-entry position while maintaining the seat back in an upright position,” and “a stow adjuster coupled to the seat and configured to lock and release the seat cushion and allow the seat cushion to move to one of a design position and a stowed position wherein the seat cushion is flush with the vehicle floor.” Claims 9-10 depend from independent Claim 8.

Yokota does not disclose, teach or suggest “a seat system,” as recited in independent Claim 8. In particular, Yokota neither discloses a four-bar linkage assembly coupled to the seat track nor a stow adjuster coupled to the seat and configured to lock and release the seat cushion and allow the seat cushion to move to one of a design position and a stowed position wherein the seat cushion is flush with the vehicle floor. Yokota discloses a slide rail device comprising a locking mechanism having an upper rail member (2) that locks and unlocks to a lower rail member (1), as shown in FIG. 1.

In contrast, the present application discloses a seat system comprising a first mechanism comprising a four-bar linkage assembly coupled to the seat track and a stow adjuster coupled to the seat and configured to lock and release the seat cushion and allow the

seat cushion to move to one of a design position and a stowed position wherein the seat cushion is flush with the vehicle floor, as shown in FIGS. 11 – 14g.

The linkage assembly of the present innovation is entirely different from that disclosed by Yokota. Yokota does not anticipate that which is disclosed and claimed in the present application.

Claims 9-10 which depend from independent Claim 8 are therefore also patentable (35 U.S.C. § 112 ¶ 4).

Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection of Claims 1-10 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b).

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The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 12-2136. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check or credit card payment form being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 12-2136. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 12-2136.

Applicant respectfully asserts that all issues raised in the Office Action have been fully addressed in this Amendment and Response and that the claims as pending are now in condition for allowance which action is respectfully requested. If the Examiner disagrees with the above for any reason and believes a telephone interview would be useful in resolving any such issue, it is requested that the Examiner contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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